

(Washington, DC) - U.S. Congressman Jason Altmire (PA-4) today made the following statement on the president's proposed budget for FY 2009.

"The budget released by the president today fails to make real progress towards reducing our growing deficit and is chock-full of misplaced spending priorities. Just as Pennsylvania families are struggling to pay skyrocketing energy prices, Bush's budget proposes slashing funding for our state's Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program by nearly \$19 million.

"The president's budget fails to adequately fund veterans' health care at a time when demand is rising steadily. In fact, Bush's budget would increase the fees our veterans must pay for their health care by \$5.2 billion over the next ten years. Just a year after the discovery of shameful conditions at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, this budget also cuts funds for constructing, renovating, and rehabilitating medical care facilities. America's heroes should not have to pay the price for President Bush's financial recklessness.

"The Bush budget also reneges on America's promise to care for its senior citizens and cuts Medicare by \$556 billion over ten years. This proposal is far too severe: It could limit seniors' access to their doctors and make it harder for our hospitals to provide patients with quality care.

"I am committed to creating a budget that fully honors our responsibilities to our veterans and seniors and makes honest advances towards restoring fiscal responsibility to our country."